lovemyhood.ca

great **places** | connected **people** | working **together**

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Acknowledgements

#lovemyhood was endorsed by Kitchener City Council in February 2017.

Thanks to Laura McBride for capturing many of the beautiful photos in this report.

This guide would not have been possible without the support of our sponsors. Thanks so much!

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> “We believe communities are stronger when we know and support our neighbours. We’re proud to have supported #lovemyhood, to help people get to know their neighbours and build a better place to call home.”
>
> *– Kerry Hadad, CEO of Your Neighbourhood Credit Union*

Cover photo: Forest Heights edible food forest

The lovemyhood vision

Helping people connect and work together to do great things in their neighbourhood

Residents take the lead and the City supports them along the way. It's a principle as simple as it is powerful. And it's the vision of #lovemyhood.

You see, Kitchener residents don't expect someone else to make their neighbourhoods great. They're ready, willing and able to do it themselves. Of course, the City should be there to help, but in the end, the best neighbourhoods are made by the people who live there.

Think of this guide as a collection of do-it-yourself (DIY) projects. Projects that are easy to complete and flexible enough to adapt to each of Kitchener's unique and amazing neighbourhoods. You and your neighbours decide the projects you care about. #lovemyhood provides useful tips, some easy, step-by-step processes, and perhaps some money to help you along the way.

After all, our neighbourhoods are more than just a physical location where we happen to live, and they are more than a boundary drawn on a map. Our neighbourhoods are a reflection of who we are – diverse, unique, interesting – and they are the foundation of the community we are working to build together.

> "This past summer, we hosted a beach party in an underused area of our neighbourhood, through the City's first Neighbourhood Placemaking Challenge. This was a new venture for us, but the City's assistance in funding and staff support helped our volunteers create a new and welcoming event. I look forward to seeing even more neighbours start new initiatives – and receive helpful support from the City – just like we did."
>
> *– Melissa Bowman, Victoria Park Neighbourhood Association*

Central Frederick "Walking on Sunshine" crosswalk

Belonging matters

A message from The Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation – kwcf.ca

No matter where we were born, or where we live, we all want to belong to something bigger than ourselves. We want to belong to a family, a group of friends, a neighbourhood, a community. When we feel like we belong, we are happier and healthier – physically, mentally, and emotionally. And we are more likely to ask others for help in a time of need, and to lend our hand to them in return.

But, here's the thing you might not know.

Our annual community checkup, Waterloo Region's Vital Signs™, shows that some residents don't always feel like they belong in our community. As a result, these residents are more isolated and lonely, they have fewer people they can turn to for help, and they are less likely to get involved in our community.

We've identified the key building blocks to belonging: authentic interactions, feeling welcome and shared experiences. Neighbourhoods are key places to support these building blocks of belonging.

When neighbours make efforts to welcome each other and become engaged in the activities and decisions of their neighbourhoods, they can increase their sense of belonging and pride in their community.

> "We host annual celebrations of Eid, Diwali and Christmas. People really appreciate being able to see how their neighbours celebrate these different holidays, which helps to create a sense of belonging in our neighbourhood. We are pleased to see #lovemyhood shares our values of diversity and inclusion, among other things."
>
> *– Nadia Muhammad, Victoria Hills Neighbourhood Association*

The foundation of lovemyhood

Amazing people doing amazing things!

Kitchener has a long history of people coming together to make things. From buttons, shirts, and boots, to car parts, digital projection and wearable technology – we have made some amazing things. But perhaps the most important thing we make here just might be community.

For so many people living in Kitchener, playing an active role in the life of our community isn't a question, it's a passion – and it has been for a long time.

Our strong and diverse network of neighbourhood associations, and the City staff who work with them in our community centres, are often the heart of a neighbourhood. Thanks, volunteers!

Neighbours are creating connections in many ways, like shovelling a neighbour's sidewalk, hosting a potluck, or welcoming a new family who just moved in. Thanks, neighbours!

Still others are contributing their time and talents through valuable partners like the Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council, United Way Waterloo Region Communities, Festival of Neighbourhoods, The Kitchener and Waterloo Community Foundation, House of Friendship and many, many more. Thanks, community partners!

Kitchener's tradition of coming together to make things is the foundation upon which #lovemyhood will succeed.

> "This past Neighbours Day, a local artist painted our rink shed with flowers. Over 75 kids helped, adding their hand print and year they were born. It began a great conversation with kids and parents about our programming and how we can improve our community. #lovemyhood will really help us engage the community in these important conversations and encourage even more people to get involved."
>
> *– Frank Prospero, Williamsburg Community Association*

Walter Be an Grand River Trail in Bridgeport

The making of lovemyhood

An amazing project team leads the way

To create #lovemyhood – Kitchener's first-ever neighbourhood strategy – a diverse group of volunteers and City staff formed a project team. Over 18 months and nearly 1,000 hours of meetings, this team researched and discussed a whole lot of exciting ideas and important information related to neighbourhoods. To ensure #lovemyhood is firmly rooted in the ideas of our community, they also led one of the City's largest and most inclusive community engagement processes.

We are incredibly grateful to this passionate project team - and to the 150 additional volunteers who helped out at events, led street team interviews, hosted a focus group and participated in the placemaking challenge.

> "I simply can't say enough about our volunteer-led project team. They care deeply about their neighbourhoods and that passion shone through their work. Every action and decision was made with the betterment of the community in mind. These folks have helped lay the foundation that will shape our neighbourhoods for years to come."
>
> *– Mike Farwell, neighbourhood strategy project team co-chair and Auditorium resident*

THANK YOU PROJECT TEAM!

This passionate and talented team has earned a very enthusiastic THANK YOU from our entire community!

- Sarah Anderson
- Andrew Bieronski
- Melissa Bowman
- Nancy Bird
- Rachel Brnjas
- Cameron Dearlove
- Michelle Drake
- Mike Farwell
- Mark Hildebrand
- Graham Jeffery
- Darren Kropf
- Chris Letizi
- Michael May
- Laura McBride
- Doug McKlusky
- Juanita Metzger
- Nadia Muhammad
- Janice Ouellette
- Frank Prospero
- Justin Readman
- Brooke Robinson
- Brandon Sloan
- Paige Sweeney
- Rohan Thompson
- Andrew Tutty
- Tristan Wilkin
- Renate Willms
- Kathleen Woodcock

Along with the project team, we are incredibly grateful to Wanda Kampijan and Wali Muhammad for their help on project team subcommittees.

Neighbourhood Strategy project team

How the community got involved

5,651 members of our community provided input into #lovemyhood. That's three people for every street in Kitchener!

We talked to people for **3,942** hours. That's like talking about neighbourhoods for **160** days straight!

We heard from many different community groups, such as neighbourhood associations, schools, faith communities, cultural clubs, sports teams, youth and seniors groups, to name a few. And we talked to people at parks, pools, splash pads, bus stations, soccer games, events and shopping centres across the city.

YOU'VE GOT MAIL!

1,870 letters mailed to community groups

CULTURE AND FAITH

99 phone calls to cultural groups and faith communities

KIDS ACTIVITY BOOKS

11,500 Show off your 'hood children's activity books

ADULT COLOURING BOOKS

5,500 Colour my 'hood adult colouring books designed by three local artists

#LOVEMYHOOD STORIES

27 photographic stories posted on Facebook

HOT CHOCOLATE

750 colouring books and hot chocolate given away at multiple locations across the city in a one day blitz

BEER AND COLOURING!

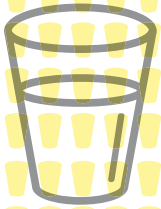
100 attendees at a Beer & Colouring event

MEDIA STORIES

59 media stories about #lovemyhood

> It was a critical goal of our team to offer all people an opportunity to be involved and influence the direction of #lovemyhood in ways that were fun, informative and accessible. We are all connected to one another and this process has highlighted for me how committed my neighbours are to building an inclusive community.
>
> *– Andrew Tutty, Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee and Laurentian Hills resident*

LEMONADE!



1,308 people spent **65** hours drinking lemonade and completing a survey at 27 events.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTY!

400 people spent **1,000** hours talking neighbourhoods at our Neighbourhood Party.

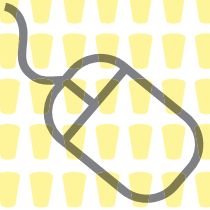
STREET TEAMS!

1,093 people spent **182** hours being interviewed across the city at 86 locations.

FOCUS GROUPS!

408 people spent **408** hours participating in 35 focus groups.

ONLINE STUFF!



1269 people spent **55** hours commenting online through a survey, ideas forum and on social media.

MEETINGS!

111 people spent **222** hours providing input at meetings with neighbourhood associations and other community partners.

PHONE SURVEY!

600 people spent **150** hours sharing their perspectives through a statistically-valid phone survey.

BRAINSTORMING!

134 people spent **268** hours identifying the red tape that limits people from acting on neighbourhood ideas.

PLACEMAKING!

310 people spent **620** hours testing and practicing placemaking at 9 different sites throughout the city.

TEAM EFFORT!

18 volunteers spent **972** hours guiding the creation of this strategy at 53 project team and subcommittee meetings.

Making great neighbourhoods

Excited to make your neighbourhood great? Fantastic! The good news is you're not alone. We heard loud and clear that our community wants a resident-led, City-supported approach to make our neighbourhoods even better than they are today. And, we heard three specific areas we should focus on:

Great Places

Create a variety of things to do at neighbourhood outdoor places, to attract lots of different people to spend time together.

Connected People

Strengthen relationships between neighbours by creating more ways for them to connect with one another.

Working Together

Help residents lead positive change in their neighbourhood, through cooperation with neighbours, organizations and the City.

> "Right now, our neighbourhood association sees too many barriers to hosting events, especially as our active volunteer base is relatively small. We're not looking to do anything spectacular. After all, a small neighbourhood event can be a real joy. Thankfully, these #lovemyhood actions will make it easier for us and others to take the initiative and have more say in how our neighbourhoods change."
>
> *– Graham Jeffery, Alpine Community Neighbourhood Association*

Tremaine Park ping pong table

Great Places

Create a variety of things to do at neighbourhood outdoor places, to attract lots of different people to spend time together.

Our neighbourhoods are diverse, made up of people of different ages, backgrounds and interests. By creating public places that have lots of different things to do, we can provide neighbours with more reasons to spend more time with one another – getting to know each other and building stronger relationships.

Think of it this way: a park can be much more than a playground for young kids. It could also be a place for young adults practicing yoga, seniors using outdoor exercise equipment or people tending to their accessible community garden plots. In other words, a park can be a place where the entire neighbourhood gathers.

> Great public places are those that show off the unique personality of the neighbourhood. When neighbours design and create these features for themselves, they are more likely to bring them to life with activities that make people feel safer and more connected to their neighbourhood.
>
> *– Juanita Metzger, Waterloo Region Crime Prevention Council and Mount Hope resident*

Wilson Community Pool mural in Kingsdale

Actions to make Great Places

1. Neighbourhood Places Program

You asked us to make it easier for you to lead popular improvements to public places, with less red tape and more support from the City. We'll do that by providing simple steps to follow when working with City staff to make neighbourhood improvements. You identified these as the most popular projects, so we'll get started on these first:

- Neighbourhood community gardens
- Resident-led traffic calming (like painted crosswalks and intersections)
- Neighbourhood markets
- Neighbourhood greening (like tree planting, adopt a park/trail/garbage can, clean up days)
- Public seating (such as more benches or rest stops, improvements at bus stops, better shading or lighting)
- Resident-led public art (like community murals)
- Little Libraries in public spaces (simplify and grow program)
- Neighbourhood signage (like identity signage or wayfinding signage)
- Cul-de-sac enhancements (such as tree planting or activity space)

2. Neighbourhood Placemaking Guide

Got an idea to create safe and thriving public places? We've developed a flexible, easy-to-use guide when you want to work with the City on a neighbourhood improvement idea (that isn't part of the Neighbourhood Places Program), or on a specific place you would like to improve as a way of encouraging people to spend more time there together.

3. Neighbourhood Placemaking Challenge

Are you still asking yourself - what the heck is placemaking and why does it matter? We'll help answer that question by hosting an annual placemaking challenge. It will help everyone understand the power of placemaking and inspire more people to get involved in their neighbourhoods. This challenge will offer grants to complete temporary or permanent improvements to a public place.

4. Tree Planting on Private Property

In Kitchener, we love our trees! We'll partner with the private sector to help you improve the look, feel and function of your street. This could include greening incentive programs, tree giveaways or neighbourhood tree planting parties, as well as building awareness of the importance of trees and how to take care of them.

5. Parks, Playgrounds and Trails Community Engagement Review

An essential way to make great places is changing the way we engage with you when developing or redeveloping neighbourhood parks, playgrounds and trails. We heard that we need to ensure these vital spaces serve the specific needs of area residents in terms of ages, interests, abilities and cultural backgrounds. We will:

- Work with residents from the very beginning of a project to explore a number of options for multi-use spaces that respond to the needs of the local neighbourhood (examples could include a playground, sports field, picnic shelter, exercise equipment, natural areas, public art, etc.).
- Be up-front with residents about constraints such as funding and maintenance, so the community understands what's possible and what's not for each specific project.

Want ideas for Great Places in your 'hood?

Check out some examples that create more things to do in Kitchener's neighbourhoods.

- Eden's Gate community garden in Laurentian Hills – *Seventh Day Adventist Church and local residents*
- Buddy Bench at Pioneer Park Public School – *students and parents*
- Neighbourhood market and cob oven – *Highland Stirling Community Group*
- Knollwood Park gazebo, trees and trails – *Auditorium Neighbourhood Association*
- Little Library on Muskoka Court – *local residents*
- Natural playground, memorial bench and mosaic art wall in the park at Homewood Avenue and West Avenue – *Brock Street residents*
- "Gaga ball" court on Marl Meadow Court cul-de-sac – *local residents*
- Neighbourhood identity banner signs on street poles – *Olde Berlin Towne Neighbourhood Association*

WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT GREAT PLACES:

"Have signs to state how welcoming our neighbourhood is. Each neighbourhood design their own sign. Make it unique."

– Street team participant at John Darling Public School fun fair

"I think that this placemaking initiative is fantastic. It allows community members to see something improved, and to take action to get things done. I think that with time, this can become something great."

– Resident who planted a pollinator garden on the Iron Horse Trail at Mill Street, in the 2016 Neighbourhood Placemaking Challenge

"Build healthy neighbourhoods by revitalizing city parks and shared spaces in our community. Bring together seniors, adults, children, families. Use parks for activities for all ages - story time, yoga, tai chi, aerobics class, etc."

– Focus group participant for Hidden Creek Drive residents

CHECK THIS OUT!

Kitchener's Festival of Neighbourhoods invites citizens to plan activities, projects, gatherings or events in their neighbourhoods that bring people together and are open to everyone. Its founding partners are John MacDonald Architect, the Social Development Centre Waterloo Region and the City of Kitchener.

The City's Festival of Neighbourhoods capital grant has helped make many great places. To learn more about this unique Kitchener initiative, visit ***waterlooregion.org/neighbourhoods****.*

Marl Meadow Court tree planting

Connected People

Strengthen relationships between neighbours by creating more ways for them to connect with one another.

Knowing your neighbours can make a huge difference to your sense of belonging and wellbeing – physical, mental and emotional. Friendly neighbours give you someone to ask for help, they make you feel safer, and, of course, they can be a whole lot of fun!

Picture this: more events that are easier to organize. More inviting community spaces and front porches that encourage casual conversations. And more information about things happening in your neighbourhood and ways to get involved.

> We all have the potential to be a positive centre for inclusive neighbourhoods. The Festival of Neighbourhoods is a tool for us to engage with our surroundings and bring to life the important elements of strong neighbourhoods that guide the neighbourhood strategy. We are pleased to work with the City to help achieve these goals.
>
> *– Festival of Neighbourhoods partners*

Williamsburg front porch

Actions to support Connected People

6. More Neighbourhood Events

You told us that we could help you connect with your neighbours by creating a set of simple steps to follow when you need to work with the City to organize an event, especially street parties. We will also work with our Festival of Neighbourhoods partners to build upon their current program and resources such as the Neighbourhood Activity Guide.

7. Event-in-a-Trailer

You asked us to make it easier and more affordable for you to host your own events. We can help by creating a bookable Event-in-a-Trailer that will deliver equipment to neighbourhoods running their own events. Things like tables, chairs, tents, barricades or a sound system. This can be done by working with the City's Festival of Neighbourhoods partners to expand their existing Neighbourhood Activity Trunk, which already includes a variety of games and crafts (it's great by the way! You should check it out at waterlooregion.org/neighbourhood-activity-trunk).

8. Inviting Front Porches

How our neighbourhoods look can have a big impact on how people connect. We'll improve and further implement zoning requirements and/or urban design guidelines to improve the functionality of front porches in new housing across the city. The goal here is to help spark more informal and casual conversations among neighbours.

9. Research into Best Practices for Community Spaces in Multi-Residential Buildings

But what if you don't have a front porch? We can learn from the success of other cities by understanding how to encourage the creation of indoor and outdoor gathering spaces in and around multi-residential buildings to create more connections between neighbours who live in these buildings. We'll look to community partners to help us with this research.

10. Block Connectors

You told us that you need better ways of communicating with your neighbours and finding out what is happening. A "Block Connector" approach can help by identifying one or two individuals on a street or in a building to start conversations with neighbours and encourage them to get involved. These block connectors could provide a "Welcome to the Neighbourhood" package to new residents, delivering a warm welcome right from the start. We'll be sure to work with community partners on this one, like our many neighbourhood associations, and United Way Waterloo Region Communities, who have already been using this approach.

11. Snow Angel Program

Let's make neighbourhoods safer and more accessible through a program that encourages people to be good neighbours by helping clear snow from their neighbours' sidewalk or driveway. We'll help by promoting the program and connecting volunteers with those who need assistance.

12. Neighbourhood Website

Let's say you've heard about a cool project from another neighbourhood and you'd love to do the same thing in your own 'hood. But where can you learn more about how it worked?

You told us that a centralized website can help people connect in new ways by showcasing your ideas and highlighting your neighbourhood events. Plus, it will make it easier for you to find information on things like the neighbourhood places program, neighbourhood associations, neighbourhood matching grants and more. It'll be a one-stop shop for all things neighbourhood in Kitchener!

Want ideas for Connected People in your 'hood?

Here's just a few examples of how residents are strengthening relationships.

- Porch parties: Schneider Creek, Hohner Ave, East Village – *local residents*
- Neighbourhood activity trunk - *Festival of Neighbourhoods*
- Bike safety fun day - Stanley Park Community Association
- Choir concert - *Forest Heights Community Association*
- Family movie day – *Settler's Grove Community Association*
- Tree trimming party – *Bridgeport Community Association*
- Monthly cake and chat in Traynor Vanier – *KW Tenants Group*
- Parkvale Park clean up - *Huron Community Association*
- Block party on Bush Clover Crescent – *local residents*
- Summer bbq – *School Council at Lackner Woods Public School*
- Carol sing and chili supper at Carlyle Circle – *local residents*
- Community connector approach in the Paulander, King Street East and Centreville-Chicopee neighbourhoods - *United Way Waterloo Region Communities*

WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT CONNECTED PEOPLE:

"We could create more friendships by having a party in every neighbourhood."

- Street team participant at Kitchener Girls Softball 50th anniversary celebration

"Give all neighbourhoods tools to hold their own street party. Make it easy for them to do."

– Focus group participant with the Kitchener Youth Action Council

"I live in a condo-based area of Kitchener that is growing drastically. I have many neighbours that are so friendly but we have no place to gather or nothing to do in order to make our tiny community friendly."

– Resident from Ira Needles and Highland area, in Engage Kitchener online survey

"Make new neighbours feel more welcome by making a welcome basket for them."

– Street team participant at the Coalition for Muslim Women KW's event

NEIGHBOURS DAY!

Every year, on the second Saturday in June, Neighbours Day brings neighbours together to have fun and celebrate the vibrant and diverse city we live in. More than 6,000 people attended in 2016! There were 31 different events across the city, with 12 of them initiated by community groups, neighbourhood associations and non-profit organizations.

*Check out **kitchener.ca/neighboursday** to get involved!*

Working Together

Help residents lead positive change in their neighbourhood, through cooperation with neighbours, organizations and the City.

There are already a lot of people doing great things in their neighbourhoods, but there is always more that can be done. Since no one person, or one group, can do it all alone, we need more people chipping in and working together to make it happen. After all, your neighbourhood can accomplish way more – and have a whole lot of fun along the way – if you take advantage of each other's unique skills, knowledge and abilities.

Imagine a lively group of neighbours, community partners, neighbourhood associations, and the City all pulling together to maximize your volunteer efforts and help you make positive change in your neighbourhood.

> United Way Kitchener Waterloo and Area is excited by #lovemyhood because we know how powerful it can be when we invest in people and neighbourhoods. By offering our support, we've seen people embrace their ability to lead the change they want to see in their neighbourhood.
>
> *– Nancy Bird, United Way Waterloo Region Communities and Williamsburg resident*

Traffic calming through art: Ahrens and Wilhelm Streets

Actions to encourage Working Together

13. Neighbourhood Action Plans

We'll work with you to shape the future of your neighbourhood through resident-led, City-supported Neighbourhood Action Plans. These plans will help you develop a clear vision for your neighbourhood, identify specific actions to achieve that vision, and have widespread support from the neighbourhood. Starting with a pilot in two to four neighbourhoods in 2017-2018, the program will be available city-wide in 2019.

14. Neighbourhood Matching Grant Increase

You told us that the City can play an important role in supporting your neighbourhood efforts by providing some cash support. To help you pay for your awesome projects, we will triple the total amount of money available through the Neighbourhood Matching Grant to $60,000 per year, and triple the maximum grant available to any one application to $15,000. We'll continue to partner with United Way Waterloo Region Communities to fund and oversee this grant.

15. Reduce Municipal Barriers

You made it clear that the City can make it easier - and way more enjoyable - for residents to play a positive role in their neighbourhood, if we review and change some City policies and procedures. So that's exactly what we'll do. And we'll start with these ones:

- Road closure requirements for events
- Insurance requirements for small events
- Crosswalk/road painting approvals
- Residential signage regulations
- Noise exemptions for small events
- Permission to host activities/events in parks
- Access to community centre space by neighbourhood groups

16. Neighbourhood Leadership Program

Lots of residents are keen to do things, but would like some training specifically designed for neighbourhood volunteers. Through the creation and delivery of a unique training program, residents can grow their knowledge and skills. Topics you told us you'd be interested in learning more about include: how to use social media, asset-based community development, volunteer recruitment and appreciation, etc. Of course, this is the kind of thing our community partners excel at, so we'll work with organizations like United Way Waterloo Region Communities and local educational institutions to develop and deliver the program.

17. Neighbourhood Demographic Profiles

You shared a desire to be more inclusive of people in your neighbourhoods, but you're not always sure who that includes. We'll help you gain a more complete understanding of the diversity of your neighbourhood by providing demographic profiles (e.g. age, language) that are easily available, at no charge.

18. Neighbourhood Use of Schools and Faith-Based Facilities

You identified the important role schools and faith-based organizations can play in the life of your neighbourhood. We'll engage schools and faith-based organizations in discussions that explore opportunities for you to gain greater access to their indoor and outdoor facilities.

Want ideas for Working Together in your 'hood?

Check out these great examples of cooperation and positive change.

- A neighbourhood plan called Making our Neighbourhood Great! – *Schneider Creek residents*
- Use of Statistics Canada demographics for neighbourhood association programming
- Arts and sports programming in local churches and schools - *Williamsburg Community Association*
- Some past Neighbourhood Matching Grant recipients:
    - Local food market – *Belmont Village*
    - Willow Green cob oven - *Cherry Park Neighbourhood Association*
    - Information boards in parks - *Central Frederick Neighbourhood Association*
    - Seniors program – *Chandler Mowat*
    - Diwali festival fireworks – *Victoria Hills Neighbourhood Association*
    - Winter carnival – *King East Neighbourhood Association*

WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT WORKING TOGETHER:

"It's important to have people to talk to, to be inclusive, and to be open to new ideas."

– Street team participant from Grace Mennonite Brethren Church's Vacation Bible School

"Remove red tape in closing a street for an event."

– Street team participant at the Kitchener Market

"The leadership program should also have a youth component in it so that tweens and teens can get involved and be more connected to their 'hood in positive ways."

– Online response from Engage Kitchener survey

NEED CASH FOR A COOL IDEA?

The Neighbourhood Matching Grant helps you pay for projects that renew a public place, foster neighbourhood pride or build relationships between neighbours. You can match the value of the grant with volunteer time, in-kind contributions or cash. Just submit a proposal to apply - anytime!

Learn more at ***kitchener.ca/lovemyhoodgrant***

River Ridge outdoor rink

So, how can you get involved?

#lovemyhood was built by and for neighbours. It will make it easier for you to get involved in your neighbourhood and add your own personal touch. But nothing will happen if you wait for others, or the City, to change your neighbourhood. We need everyone pitching in, taking initiative and being engaged.

Here are a few ideas to get you going:

- Say hi to a neighbour sometime this week. A friendly wave and hello can go a long way.
- Find out when the next event is happening in your neighbourhood and go meet your neighbours. Or, host your own event! Try something simple, like a potluck, BBQ or games night.
- Get in touch with your local neighbourhood association to see what they have coming up, and offer to lend a hand.
- Do you see an idea or project in this guide that captures your interest? Share it with a few neighbours and see if anyone else gets excited by it too. Who knows? Maybe some people were already thinking about planting trees or picking up litter, and would love to do it together.

Regardless of whether you've been involved in your neighbourhood for years, or are just getting started, our community is so thankful, and so lucky, that you're helping make your neighbourhood the best it can be.

> "My neighbours and I hide little painted fairy doors in our neighbourhood, to add a bit of "magic" to the street. We've found that you don't need to make huge changes to the landscape to make people feel connected. Just start with what you have and find your own way to make it better."
>
> *– Laura McBride, Central Frederick resident*

FURIOUS7

The City's commitment to you

Funding for Neighbourhood Projects

Dedicated funding will be available to neighbourhood groups through the Neighbourhood Matching Grant, Neighbourhood Action Plans, and the annual Neighbourhood Placemaking Challenge.

Staff Support for Neighbourhood Projects

We are ready to help make your next neighbourhood project happen.We'll help you navigate city hall, bring partners together, and make it as easy as possible for you to get things done.

Monitoring & Reporting

As work is done, we will be monitoring progress and providing regular reports to the community so you can hold us accountable to the #lovemyhood vision.

Evaluating Our Work

A "State of Kitchener's Neighbourhoods" report will show how we are all doing in creating and supporting neighbourhoods that are safe, connected, engaged, accessible, inclusive and diverse.

> "I have long believed in the power of neighbours connecting with one another, and working together, to build an inclusive community where everyone belongs. On behalf of City Council, thank you to the many volunteers and residents who contributed their passion and their ideas to #lovemyhood. We are strongly committed to turning the ideas and actions of this strategy into a reality."
>
> *– Mayor Berry Vrbanovic, City of Kitchener*

#AMAZING

Kitchener's guide to **great neighbourhoods**

| great **places** | connected **people** | working **together** |